

Message Text

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70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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R 311413Z JUL 73

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2070

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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CAPETOWN FOR O'NEILL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MOPS, MZ

SUBJ: COMMUNIQUE 20/73: PORTUGUESE INFLICT HEAVY CASUALTIES
ON FRELIMO

REF: LOURENCO MARQUES 0506

1. LOCAL PRESS OF JULY 31 CARRIES COMMUNIQUE NO. 20/73 OF
MOZAMBIQUE ARMED FORCES HIGH COMMAND ANNOUNCING THAT IN LAST
FEW DAYS PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES OPERATING IN AREAS OF CABO
DELGADO AND TETE OBTAINED FOLLOWING RESULTS: (A) NEAR MUEDA
(PORTUGUESE STRONGHOLD IN CABO DELGADO) GE FORCES KILLED 20
ENEMY ELEMENTS AND CAPURED SOME ARMS; (B) CLOSE TO NAZOMBE
(NEAR TANZANIAN BORDER IN NORTHWESTERN CABO DELGADO) LIGHT
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INFANTRY AND GE FORCES INFLICTED 80 DEATHS ON ENEMY AND

CAPTURED ABOUT THREE TONS ON ARMS INCLUDING 15 AUTOMATIC RIFLES, 5 MACHINE GUNS AND 82 MILLIMETER MORTARS; (C) NORTH OF TEMBUE AND ZOBUE (ON MALAWI BORDER IN EASTERN TETE) TWO GE UNITS KILLED 10 ENEMY AND CAPTURED SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OF ARMS INCLUDING SEVEN AUTOMATIC WEAPONS.

2. COMMENT: TIMING OF COMMUNIQUE NO. 20/73 CONSTITUTES FITTING FAREWELL PRESENT FOR GENERAL KAULZA DE ARRIAGA WHO SCHEDULED LEAVE MOZAMBIQUE AUGUST 1. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHETHER HEAVIER-THAN-USUAL CASUALTIES REPORTEDLY INFLICTED ON FRELIMO FORCES NEAR NAZOMBE WILL SPARK OFF NEW ALLEGATIONS OF CIVILIAN MASSACRES COMMITTED BY PORTUGUESE FORCES. IN ROUNDING OUT CASUALTY FIGURES AND IN PAUCITY OF DETAIL, ABOVE COMMUNIQUE BEARS MARKS OF HASTY PREPARATION AND MAY BE AMPLIFIED LATER.

3. WHILE NO FURTHER INCIDENTS REPORTED IN THE GORONGOSA PARK SECTOR SINCE REFTTEL, IT IS QUITE COMMONLY ACCEPTED THAT SOME TYPE OF FRELIMO ACTION ON BEIRA-VILA PERY-RHODESIA ROAD CAN BE EXPECTED ANY TIME. RHODESIAN MANAGER OF AVIARIO DOS MOHOTOS CHICKEN FARM NEAR VILA PERY RECENTLY TOLD CONGEN OFFICER THAT RHODESIAN FARMERS WORKING ON FARM INTEND SEND THEIR FAMILIES HOME. HE SAID THEY HAVE HEARD GUN FIRE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, AND THAT PORTUGUESE MILITARY HAVE SUPPLIED THEM WITH SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLES FOR DEFENSE AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACK (NOTE: RHODESIANS TEND TO BE MORE SKITTISH THAN PORTUGUESE IN THEIR ESTIMATES OF SITUATION.)

4. SCARE REPORTS IN SOME SOUTH AFRICAN PAPERS TO EFFECT THAT FRELIMO NOW "WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE" OF BEIRA CITY, AND THAT BEIRA-RHODESIAN ROAD IN DANGER OF BEING CUT, SEEM UNWARRANTEDLY GLOOMY. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN POSSIBLE FOR FRELIMO TO MAKE TROUBLE IN MAIN CITIES IF THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE RISK OF CHALLENGING STRONG DGS (SECURITY POLICE) URBAN NETWORK. FRELIMO HAS NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO STOP TRAFFIC OR PREVENT PORTUGUESE FROM FORCING THROUGH ARMED CONVOYS ON ANY ROAD OR HIGHWAY. SUSTAINED FRELIMO ATTACKS ON BEIRA-RHODESIA HIGHWAY WOULD BE DIFFICULT DUE LENGTH OF SUPPLY LINES FROM MALAWI AND ZAMBIAN BORDERS. THUS HARD TO ENVISAGE MORE THAN SPORADIC FIRING OR OCCASIONAL AMBUSH, AND PERHAPS SOME MINES, ALTHOUGH LATTER NOT SO EASY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO PLANT NOW THAT ENTIRE ROAD IS ASPHALTED. HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD NOT DISCOUNT PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT WHICH EVEN ISOLATED FRELIMO ACTION CAN HAVE THROUGHOUT AN AREA, EVEN WHEN BASIC MILITARY SITUATION REMAINS RELATIVELY UNCHANGED.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FRELIMO ACTION APPEARING IN PRESS RECENTLY TEND TO EMPHASIZE ATTACKS BY GUERRILLAS ON ALDEAMENTOS AND CASUALTIES INFLICTED ON CIVILIAN POPULACE, PRESUMABLY AS

ANSWER TO ALLEGATIONS OF MASSACRES COMMITTED BY PORTUGUESE
FORCES WHICH HAVE GAINED SUCH CURRENCY IN INTERNATIONAL CIRCLES
IN PAST FEW WEEKS.
VAN OSS

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